

OPEN AND SHUT?

Friday, January 20, 2012

Library of Congress neutral on the Research Works Act



The Library of Congress has indicated that it is neutral on the controversial Research Works Act (RWA).

Commenting by email, a spokesperson told me, "The Library does not take a position on legislation we haven't requested, unless asked a question directly by our oversight or appropriations committees. As a practical matter, we would not likely disseminate in any way that would violate copyright."

The Library of Congress is a **member** of the Association of American Publishers (AAP), which backs the RWA, and which has **described** the bill as "significant legislation that will help reinforce America's leadership in scholarly and scientific publishing in the public interest and in the critical peer-review system that safeguards the quality of such research."

If passed, the RWA would be a major setback for the Open Access movement, since it would reverse the **Public Access Policy** introduced by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 2005, a policy that requires all NIH-funded research to be made freely accessible online within 12 months. The bill would also prevent other federal agencies from imposing similar requirements on researchers.

On the NIH Policy the Library of Congress spokesperson commented, "I can find no evidence of the Library having a pro- or con- stance on the NIH policy."

Gary Price at **INFOdocket** recently **drew my attention** to a 12th January **announcement** by the Library of Congress indicating that Gayle Osterberg has been appointed director of communications at the Library, effective January 30th.

Osterberg was instrumental in founding the **Copyright Alliance**, an organisation whose **membership** includes the largest supporters of another controversial piece of legislation – the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). Prior to that, Osterberg **served for two years** as vice president of corporate communications at the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), a major player in **trying to get SOPA passed**.

The day after it was announced that Osterberg would be joining the Library of Congress, the Copyright Alliance published a **press release** praising US Representatives Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) for co-sponsoring the Research Works Act, otherwise known as **HR 3699**.

Meanwhile, another member of the AAP has also indicated that it wishes to remain neutral on the RWA. By email, director of media relations at the **RAND Corporation** Jeffrey Hiday told me, "RAND is not taking a position on the Research Works Act. We make all of our unclassified research available on our website and will continue to do so."

By contrast, a number of AAP members have disavowed the RWA, including **MIT Press**, **ITHAKA**, **Pennsylvania State University Press**, **California University Press**, **Rockefeller University Press**, **Nature Publishing Group**, and the non-profit **American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)**, which publishes the journal **Science**.

Further background on the RWA is available **here**.

Posted by Richard Poynder at 14:16



Labels: Library of Congress, Research Works Act

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I certainly do not want to decry the OA model of publishing, if the underlying intent is worthy and totally scientific. As warranted by Dom Mitchell, Operations Manager of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), in an online post on 2 Oct, 2020, almost 63% of 15,259 journals indexed in DOAJ do not levy any article processing charge (APC). However, if economic expediency takes charge, which unfortunately seems to have done lately, with the sudden pandemic of 'Predatory journals', this model seems to be doing more harm than good to the scientific community, and even to the society at large. Here, the role of so-

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Switzerland, the Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute, or more usually MDPI , is an open access publisher...



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Please note the postscript to this interview here The open-access publisher Dove Medical Press has a controversial past and I have writ...



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***Update: On August 26th 2016, the US government (Federal Trade Commission) announced that it has charged OMICS with making false claims, ...



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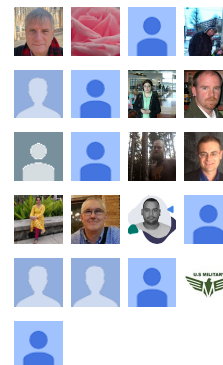
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